

IX

LYCEUM PRODUCTIONS

*"THE MERCHANT OF VENICE"³ TO
"ROMEO
AND JULIET"*

¹ * /npHE Merchant of Venice " was acted two hundred and JL fifty consecutive nights on the occasion of the first production. On the hundredth night every member of the audience was presented with Henry Irving's acting edition of the play bound in white vellum—a solid and permanent souvenir, paper, print and binding all being of the best. The famous Chiswick Press did all his work of this kind. On the title page was printed :

" I count myself In nothing else so happy
As in a **soul** remembering my good
friends,."

At the close of the performance which took place on Saturday, February 14, 1880, Henry entertained a party of 350 to supper on the stage. This was the first of those enormous gatherings which afterwards became an institution at the Lyceum.

It was at this, supper that Lord Houghton surprised us all by making a very sarcastic speech about the stage and actors generally. It was no doubt more interesting than the, " butter " which is usually applied to the profession at such functions, but every one felt that it was rather rude to abuse long runs when the company were met to celebrate a hundredth performance!